

Ad Clerum 3c.1

Lay Administration of the elements of Holy Communion.

The administration of Holy Communion by lay people is an important ministry. For most this will happen within church services, but some will take the sacrament to the house-bound and sick people in their homes during the service or afterwards,

Under the 'Administration of Holy Communion Regulations 2015' (<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2248936/gs%201992%20-%20holy%20communion%20regulations.pdf>), the Bishop of St Albans has given general authority to Incumbents and Priests-in-Charge (and in vacancies Rural/Area Deans) to authorise people to distribute the Holy Sacrament in their respective parishes.

Such authorisation should only be made when the following conditions are met:

- The person entitled to give the authorisation is satisfied that the person is a regular communicant of the Church of England.
- The person entitled to give the authorisation has obtained the consent of the parochial church council.
- A child may not be so authorised unless the child has been admitted to Holy Communion in accordance with the Admission of Baptized Children to Holy Communion Regulations 2006.
- A pupil of a church school may not be so authorised to distribute the Holy Sacrament at services in the school unless the person entitled to give the authorisation has obtained the consent of the head teacher (or acting head teacher) of the school.
- The incumbent or priest-in-charge of a parish must keep under review the authorisations given in the parish and a record must be maintained.

Furthermore:

- All those being authorised for the distribution of the Sacraments at Holy Communion should undergo relevant preparation.
- It is assumed that those authorised for the distribution of the Sacraments to the house-bound and sick will already be assisting with the administration of the Holy Communion in church, and that a parish will nominate only a few people to help with this wider ministry.
- The agreement of the housebound or sick person himself/herself must be sought by the parish priest before a lay person takes him/her the sacrament.
- Care is needed for the sake of reverence and to guard against casualness. If there is an aumbry for the reservation of the sacrament, there should be a

strict check on the distribution of keys. There must be no unseemly keeping of the sacrament in people's homes.

- This ministry to the sick should continue to be a shared one between clergy and laity and should not be entirely devolved by the clergy to other people.
- It is the incumbent's responsibility to make sure that adequate preparation and training are given to those involved in this ministry to the house-bound and sick.
- Permission to exercise this ministry is automatically extended to those who are accredited lay ministers or licensed readers in the diocese.

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